



State of Arizona
Department of Education

Process to Identify and Investigate Accountability Fraudulent Activity

When a school is identified under two or more of the five criteria below and there is reasonable concern for systemic issues, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE or Department) will withhold the accountability determination and commence an investigation to determine whether accountability data were manipulated and submitted under fraudulent pretense.

Qualifying criteria:

1. School is flagged on Erasure report for the current year
2. School has been previously flagged on Erasure report within the previous 3 years
3. Verbal or written allegations of testing irregularities received by the ADE Assessments and/or Accountability units
4. Sudden and/or significant changes to student enrollment data which positively impacts an accountability determination
5. Abnormal and/or inexplicable gains in the current year as compared to school's performance in prior years

The Department will review individual test records of students, enrollment transactions, and other applicable evidence. The Department's Investigators may also investigate the school site and personnel in order to collect additional information. The Department will evaluate the findings of any internal investigations or reports submitted by the school or local education agency (LEA).

If the Department determines that manipulation of test data has occurred, compromised test records will be excluded from the school's AND LEA's accountability determination which will be recalculated to reflect the missing test records. In addition, if the Department determines that manipulation of student enrollment data has occurred, the Department may correctly attribute data in the school's AND LEA's accountability determination which will be recalculated. If the Department finds evidence that a certified educator was involved in cheating, the Department will report those individuals to the State Board of Education for further investigation of unprofessional conduct that may result in discipline. When applicable, the Department will audit the reported average daily membership and average daily attendance as they may impact funding paid to the entity.

The entity may appeal the recalculated letter grade in the A-F Substantive Appeals process.

